

**Amendments to the specification:**

Please amend the paragraph beginning with line 29 on page 4 and ending with line 3 on page 5 as shown in the following marked up copy.

“Specifically desired is a tougher paper or board which has improved overall mechanical performance. The thin discontinuous thermoplastic or thermosetting polymer is applied in various geometrical formations such as in thin stripes, equi-distant circles, and/or diamond shape formations to define a plurality of discrete areas of said polymer material distributed over said web and forming spaced crack-arresting islands that impede crack propagation in the web while other mechanical properties such as tensile strength and elasticity modulus experience no change. Other patterns are also within the contemplation of the invention. A very thin layer of the thermoplastic or thermosetting polymer is deposited, no more than 5% of the basis weight of the paper, to the surface of the paper after it has been formed. The polymer penetrates into the paper or board in these geometrical formations before an additional coating can be applied. The resultant product can be wound on rolls.”

Please add the following paragraph after the third full paragraph ending with line 22 on page 7.

“As described hereinabove, the present invention comprises a crack-resistant paper or board made from a pre-formed web of cellulose fibers with a thin film of polymer material deposited onto the web in a discontinuous geometric pattern and impregnated into the web to form a plurality of spaced apart discrete areas distributed over said web, said polymer-impregnated areas forming crack-arresting islands that impede crack propagation and fracturing in said web without changing other properties of the paper or board, such as the modulus of elasticity and tensile strength. The polymer material penetrates into the web to form a substantially uniform flush surface for subsequent treatment such as coating and printing.”